

-----Original Message-----

From: Nick Cozzarelli [mailto:ncozzare@socrates.Berkeley.EDU]

Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2001 6:48 PM

To: P.Campbell@nature.com

Subject: Fwd: Re: New Journal for NAS

Phil,

Below is an email on my latest thinking on the kind of journal that Mike Eisen spoke to you about at Banbury. I think it would be wonderful, truly a leadership gesture, if the new journal were cosponsored by Nature and the NAS. It would be a statement that the best science journal in the world and the leading science society in the world think that this experiment is worth a serious try and that they feel it is an acceptable risk. If you feel that you would like to go it alone that is fine also. What is needed though is for someone to bite the bullet. I have been calling the journal "Gettysburg" after the address by Abraham Lincoln because it would be of, for, and by scientists but this is obviously a place holder.

Nick

Date: Wed, 9 May 2001 15:10:14 -0700

To: CozzarelliN

From: "Patrick O. Brown" <pbrown@cmgm.stanford.edu> (by way of Nicholas Cozzarelli) (by way of Nick Cozzarelli)

Subject: Re: New Journal for NAS

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

Amici,

I have written below a more fleshed out discussion of principles as I see it for Gettysburg. I am speaking for only myself. For any involvement of the academy, we would need to get permission from the Publication Committee of the NAS Council and the Council itself. That is not a slam dunk. The Council will need to be convinced that it is worth the money and that such a venture is appropriate for the Academy to get involved in it. I think the latter may be the harder sell. Some council members already expressed this reservation.

The list below is a bit repetitive of past emails on the topic and longish, but it helped me to focus. I think a conference call and/or private chats is needed for major decisions.

A score of principles.

1. NAS sponsored. What is our chance of getting a co-sponsor that will not compromise our principles. Several granting agencies are behind new ventures in publishing such as JSTOR and Science's STKE. I also think Nature would be great, if they do not insist on a big profit margin. By having two sponsors the journal has some independence. I like very much NC plan over the BA and CR plans. The new journal should be independent of PNAS but be synergistic with it. I think this is better for Gettysburg and for PNAS.
2. Online only. This is going to scare the biologists. I like the idea of the guarantee by PNAS and PMC of permanence. We could have content also on the PNAS web site. "Also of interest in Gettysburg" We could just link from PNAS web site to the PMC site, but I think it will allay partially the fears of authors to have it on the PNAS site.
3. Lickety fast. Sue Wickner suggested that we guarantee some fast review time such as two weeks. Since articles will be published soon after acceptance with minimum redaction, there will be an appealing rapidity of publication. The only problem here is that speed can lead to low standards and the default becomes acceptance.
4. Free to all.
5. General science journal.
6. Very high peer review standards. I feel that this is essential. Bruce Alberts says that we should not worry if we have few papers as long as they are very good papers. We have to recognize a down side. Many of the PLoS signers will want a new outlet and they will find that Gettysburg is that outlet for only a small minority of them.
7. No issues. Immediate release of approved and redacted articles. Cumulative grouping of articles according to subjects. This feature was popular at the PNAS editorial board meeting because would allow varied and multiple groupings of an article. This may help counteract the feeling that an Online only journal is only out there in the ether.
8. Cost. We have various estimates. Vitek told Harold Varmus that for his journals it costs \$200 to \$500 per article. A back of the envelope calculation by Ken Fulton came up with \$1800/ article based on PNAS costs. I guessed that about \$1,000/article was a better estimate. Money should come for marginal costs from author charges which must be waived when requested. We must get a better fix on costs and soon. It is the first question any potential sponsor will ask and it will dictate policies. Bruce Alberts asked Morna Conway to help us out here and Morna has graciously agreed. Morna is a super duper publishing consultant for many journals including PNAS. When I brought up the first stab of Pat Brown of \$100/article as a submission fee, many said that it would be pain for people to get it through accounting from their institutions, would be flouted often by the 80 % whose papers are rejected, and would be seen as a way for the authors who fail to subsidize those who succeed. Pat had suggested \$500/article publication costs. That may a bit on the low side.

We will have set up costs in addition to marginal costs. I presume that the sponsors will cover most of the set up costs. To give you a range, just to set up an online submission and review for PNAS cost us over a million dollars. Bruce Alberts thought that making Gettysburg part of PNAS would save a lot of set up money but

Diane Sullenberger thinks that a more streamlined bare bones outfit than PNAS could do things much more cheaply, for example, in setting up Online publication. The rough guesses are in the range of a couple of million dollars in set up funds.

9. Articles in public domain. Ken Fulton pointed out correctly that the first thing we need to do is to check on the legalities and practices of the academy on giving up copyright. The academy has a responsive and expert legal staff and I will take care of this.

10. Archival version of record is XML conforming to PMC DTD. But PDF would be available also.

11. Published through PMC. Depending on cost, I hope also published somewhere else such as at High Wire Press.

12. Sponsor(s) guarantee losses for 3 years.

13. NAS oversight by Publications Committee of Council. This is a given if the NAS is involved.

14. Need great editors. So many will volunteer for Ed Bd that it will be hard to choose. We need to make sure that there is broad representation of blue ribbon science. We also must have the young editors with energy flowing from their hair to make this work. Jack Halpern, the VP of NAS, pointed out that we must have first rate editors from the physical sciences if we want this to be a general science journal. It is hard to get physical science papers if the journal starts out 95% biology. This is a key policy issue that must be addressed early on. What fraction of the articles do we anticipate will be outside of biology.

I think the most important task is to identify an editor or small group of editors who will be in charge. This person must be willing to put in a lot of time into making it work and must be someone of stature who will convince authors to take the plunge. I feel that Gettyburg should be independent of PNAS and thus I should not be the editor. I would be happy though to be a member of Editorial Board and I think we need some cross representation with PNAS. Obviously, the governance, financing, and leadership issues are intertwined.

15. Get pledges for papers from PLoS signers and others before start journal. Dowry. This is essential but they will not get us many articles from the physical and social sciences.

16. Articles should have a generous limit on size. I originally thought no limit but many have pointed out that there is virtue to discipline.

17. Each article could have its own "cover" striking visual image if authors desire. PNAS Board liked this feature.

18. Authors asked to submit according to limited templates as in math to cut down costs and speed up process.

19. Complementary to PNAS. No print, no NAS member approval, generously limited size.

20 Sister journal to PNAS, like Nature Genetics and Nature. Pass articles back and forth but each maintains standards. Synergy and kick start new journal. But must be seen as cf. to PNAS not rejects of PNAS. Cell and Nature stables manage to do this.

When do we start? Because of the PLoS deadline, the answer must be soon, but is January 1, 2002 reasonable. If we are to get grants, that may be too soon. Perhaps we can get enough up front money from sponsor(s) to start it up, and tell them we will try fund raising elsewhere.

There has been some progress in the last two days. I forgot to mention that Carla Schatz at the council meeting had a good idea. She said that authors would worry that the new journal will not be archived properly or go out of existence and with it their science. She said that the NAS and PNAS should guarantee the longevity of the contributions. This could be done in several ways

ranging from PNAS printing it, to PNAS also publishing it, to it also appearing on the PNAS site, to some guarantee. I prefer something like middle two alternatives.

At the Editorial Board meeting Bruce Alberts suggested a different approach. He feels that the new journal should be run out of the PNAS offices and use the PNAS editorial board augmented by others. He argued that it would not be cost effective to set up a separate journal and that this would give a kick start by association with NAS. He suggested the journal be called something that would make the association clear. Radding suggested "Academy intersciences". Lets call this the BA plan as opposed to the NC plan which envisioned the new journal getting money, advice, help, and prestige from NAS but being independent- a sister journal. There were objections stated to the BA plan.

1. The board works hard now and did not wish to add another job.
2. New staff would need to be hired and we have no space now and would have to find a new office.
3. The editor of the new journal should be identified first .
4. The new journal is something important for a group of mostly young scientists who are not academy members and these guys should run it.
5. It might be disadvantageous to PNAS to have another journal that sounds like it but is free.
6. PNAS is improving and we should focus on it and not the new journal.

Thus a third model was suggested and developed by Charles Radding that does not exclude either of the first two.

The CR model is that the 20 principles above becomes part of PNAS, track IV. Authors when they publish in PNAS have a choice of the usual three tracks or track IV. If they choose Track IV there work is published only online but outside of the subscription barrier, i.e. it is free to all at PMC and HWP. These articles can be of any length and copyright is in the public domain. These authors would pay for this privilege an amount that covers the incremental cost of the publishing that is not covered by the usual source of income. I would guess that this amount will be about \$1000 / article but Vitek said to Harold that his journals cost \$200 -\$500 per article. Some said that the amount will be more than \$1,800 and we clearly need to get the cost estimates under control.

The CR model was favored by the board. My sense was that the NC model was next in votes, and the BA model last. These are initial impressions though and they could change rapidly. A subcommittee of the Editorial Board will investigate these three models and report back shortly to the rest of the board. I am the chair of the subcommittee. I need your advice in general but there are several specific areas:

1. Who will be the leaders of the new journal who are willing to put in the considerable amount of time necessary to get it going. Even in the BA model, there will have to be leadership and energy from outside of PNAS.
2. Where will the money come from for start up? If the money comes only from the NAS, then they will rightly want to minimize the cost and disruption.
3. What do you think of the three alternatives?

Nick